

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 00107 01 OF 02 101622Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00
SSM-03 IO-13 ACDA-07 OMB-01 FEAE-00 ERDA-05 OES-06
TRSE-00 EB-07 COME-00 AID-05 /123 W
-----101657Z 124860 /65

O P 101509Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2706
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 194
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
CIA WASHDC
COMSIXTHFLT
COMPHIBRON SIX
COM THREE FOUR MAU
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 0107

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION JANUARY 8-10

REF: BEIRUT 0089 (DTG 071542Z JAN 77)
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 00107 01 OF 02 101622Z

1. SUMMARY. THE QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE JAN 7 ANNOUNCED A
MIDNIGHT JAN 12 DEADLINE FOR THE COLLECTION OF HEAVY WEAPONS
AND FOR PALESTINIAN "REGULAR FORCES" TO DEPART LEBANON. THE
ASF BEGAN FURTHER DEPLOYMENTS IN THE SHUF JAN 9. THE NEW
CENSORSHIP SYSTEM IS BEGINNING TO IMPOSE LIMITATIONS ON THE
FOREIGN PRESS; AL MOHARRIR, AS SAFIR AND AN NAHAR HAVE RESUMED

PUBLICATION. AT A CABINET MEETING JAN 8, A NUMBER OF FINANCIAL DECREES WERE ISSUED, INCLUDING ONE TO GUARANTEE INVESTMENTS AGAINST RISKS OF CIVIL DISTURBANCES. THE KFUR FRONT PLANS TO VISIT DAMASCUS AT PRESIDENT ASAD'S INVITATION AF THE WEAPONS COLLECTION DEADLINE. THE PHALANGE HEADQUARTERS IN ASHRAFIYA WAS VISITED BY A LEFTIST DELEGATION IN AN EFFORT TO DEMONSTRATE OPPOSITION TO PARTITION. PRESIDENT ASAD AND SARKIS MAY SOON MEET IN DAMASCUS. US AND FRENCH TECHNICAL TEAMS ARE NOW VISITING BEIRUT. GOL HAS ANNOUNCED AN END TO THE FREE MARKET ON PETROLEUM PRODUCTS. THE HIGHWAYS DIRGEN HAS ANNOUNCED PLANS FOR EXTENSIVE WORK ON LEBANON'S ROAD NETWORK. BANKS TO REOPEN. END SUMMARY.

2. QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE DECISION ON HEAVY WEAPONS COLLECTION. AT A MEETING JAN 7, CHAIRED BY PRESIDENT SARKIS, THE QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE FIXED MIDNIGHT JAN 12 AS THE DEADLINE FOR THE COLLECTION OF HEAVY WEAPONS AND FOR PALESTINIAN "REGULAR FORCES," WHICH NUMBER BETWEEN 2000-4000, TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY (BEIRUT 0096). AL BAYRAQ REPORTED JAN 10 THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS TOLD HIS CABINET THE QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE DECISION IS IRREVOCABLE AND THAT THE DEADLINE WILL NOT BE EXTENDED. SARKIS ALSO REPORTEDLY GAVE WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS TO THE ASF TO EXECUTE THE DECISIONS BY FORCE IF NECESSARY. ACCORDING TO AN NAHAR, THE COMMITTEE WILL MEET AGAIN JAN 13 TO SUPERVISE THE ENFORCEMENT OF ITS DECISIONS AND TO CONSIDER THE NEXT STEPS TO BE TAKEN TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAIRO AGREEMENT. CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BEIRUT 00107 01 OF 02 101622Z

SO FAR ALL PARTIES CONCERNED HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE WITH THE ASF IN THE ARMS COLLECTION EFFORTS. ASH SHARQ SAYS THE ASF HAS COMPLETE AND DETAILED LISTS OF WEAPONS IN THE POSSESSION OF ALL GROUPS.

3. FURTHER ASF DEPLOYMENTS IN THE SHUF. AN NAHAR REPORTED JAN 10 THAT THE ASF JAN 9 COMPLETED DEPLOYMENTS IN THE SHUF AT BARJA, KITRAMAYA, ANUT, MAZBUD, MGHARIYA, SIBLIN, RUMAYLAH AND JIYE. L'ORIENT-LE JOUR SAYS THEY ARE EXPECTED TO ALSO DEPLOY IN BAAQLIN AND MUKTARA, THE FEUDAL SEAT OF DRUZE LEADER DAMAL JUNBLATT.

4. FOREIGN PRESS CENSORSHIP. AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE FIRST LEGISLATIVE DECREE OF THE CABINET ON JAN 1 ON CENSORSHIP, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE SURETE GENERAL, ANTOINE DAHDAH, HAS ANNOUNCED CONTROL MEASURES AFFECTING THE FOREIGN PRESS. MEASURES INCLUDE REQUIREMENTS THAT WIRE SERVICES INSTALL TELEX RECEIVERS, AT THEIR OWN

EXPENSE, IN THE CENSORSHIP OFFICE AND THAT NEWS ORGANIZATIONS PAY AN "EXPORT TAX" OF 10 LEBANESE POUNDS PER DAY. GHASSAN TUEINI, AN NAHAR PUBLISHER WHO JUST RETURNED TO BEIRUT FROM PARIS, SAID HE WOULD DISCUSS THE NEW REGULATIONS WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS AT A MEETING SCHEDULED FOR JAN 8 (BEIRUT 0095). THREE MORE NEWSPAPERS HAVE RESUMED PUBLICATION: AL MOHARRIR, AS SAFIR AND AN NAHAR.

5. CABINET DECISIONS. THE CABINET MET JAN 8 AND PUBLISHED THE FOLLOWING DECREES ON FINANCIAL MATTERS:

A. CREATION OF A NATIONAL INSTITUTION TO GUARANTEE INVESTMENTS AGAINST THE RISKS OF WAR AND CIVIL DISTURBANCES. IT WILL HAVE COMPLETE FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE AUTONOMY.

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PAGE 04 BEIRUT 00107 01 OF 02 101622Z

B. AMENDMENT OF THE STATUTE OF THE NATIONAL BANK FOR INDUSTRIAL AND TOURISTIC DEVELOPMENT TO BROADEN ITS SCOPE OF ACTIVITY.

C. PROVISION FOR LEBANON'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE PAN-ISLAMIC BANK.

D. CREATION OF A BANK FOR HOUSING, PARTICULARLY TO FACILITATE LOW-COST LOANS TO LOW INCOME GROUPS.

E. A CREDIT OF 31 MILLION POUNDS FOR THE TELEX AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS.

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 00107 02 OF 02 101629Z
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USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 0107

6. KFUR FRONT. AFTER A KFUR FRONT MEETING JAN 8, IT
WAS ANNOUNCED THAT A DELEGATION WOULD VISIT DAMASCUS
IN RESPONSE TO AN INVITATION FROM PRESIDENT ASAD.
THE NEWSPAPERS OF JAN 10 ANNOUNCED, HOWEVER, THAT THE
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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 00107 02 OF 02 101629Z

VISIT IS NOW UNCERTAIN, AND MAY BE PUT OFF BECAUSE OF
CAMILLE CHAMOUN'S POOR HEALTH. AN NAHAR SAYS THE
FRONT PLANS TO HOLD TALKS WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS PRIOR TO
VISITING SYRIA AND WANTS TO SEE HOW THE COLLECTION OF
HEAVY WEAPONS PROCEEDS.

7. PHALANGE VISITED BY LESTIST DELEGATION. A DELEGATION
HADED BY KAMAL CHATILA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE
LEFTIST NATIONAL MOVEMENT, VISITED PIERRE GEMAYEL AT
PHALANGE HEADQUARTERS IN ASHRAFIYA ON JAN 8. THE PRESS
QUOTED CHATILA AS SAYING, "WE HAVE COME TO THE HOME OF THE
KATAEB TO DEMONSTRATE THAT WE WILL OVERCOME ALL
OBSTACLES IN OUR REFUSAL TO RECOGNIZE PARTITION. WE
PRESENTED OUR CONDOLENCES TO SHEIKH PIERRE AND TO THE
MEMBERS OF THE (PHALANGE) POLITICAL BUREAU FOR THE
INNOCENT VICTIMS OF THE CRIME PERPETRATED AT (ASHRAFIYA)."
(WITH REGARD TO THE ASHRAFIYA EXPLOSION, INTERIOR
MINISTER SALMAN SAID JAN 8 THERE IS STILL NOTHING

SPECIFIC, BUT THAT HE HOPED THE CULPRITS WOULD BE FOUND SOON.)

8. DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES. ASH SHARQ ANNOUNCED JAN 8 THAT A MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENTS SARKIS AND ASAD WILL TAKE PLACE IN DAMASCUS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. AMAL SAID THAT EGYPT'S VICE PRESIDENT HUSNI MOUBARAK IS PREPARING TO VISIT LEBANON SOON. THE LEBANESE PRESS ALSO REPORT THAT THERE WILL BE A MEETING OF LEBANESE AMBASSADORS, HEADED BY FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS, IN PARIS SHORTLY. PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS DEPARTED JAN 10 FOR BAGHDAD AND THE GULF STATES, WHERE HE IS SEEKING RECONSTRUCTION AID.

9. US AND FRENCH TECHNICAL TEAMS IN LEBANON. A US TECHNICAL TEAM ARRIVED IN BEIRUT JAN 9 AND WAS IMMEDIATELY RECEIVED BY PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS. THE FRENCH TECHNICAL TEAM WHICH ARRIVED JAN 6 WAS ALSO RECEIVED BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON JAN 9. THE PRESS REPORTS THAT CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BEIRUT 00107 02 OF 02 101629Z

THE FRENCH TEAM IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN PLANS FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF THE CENTER CITY.

10. GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS. THE GOL HAS ANNOUNCED THAT AS OF JAN 15 THE FREE MARKET IN PETROLEUM PRODUCTS WILL CEASE AND THE PRICE OF GASOLINE WILL BE STABILIZED AT ABOUT 14 LEBANESE POUNDS FOR 20 LITERS, PROVIDING THE GOL WITH REVENUES OF APPROXIMATELY 150 MILLION LEBANESE POUNDS PER YEAR. TECHNICIANS NOTE THAT THE OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT PRICE OF GASOLINE CORRESPONDS TO THAT IN OTHER COUNTRIES. THE PRESS REPORTS THAT BOTH THE ZAHRANI AND TRIPOLI REFINERIES ARE EXPECTED TO REACH FULL CAPACITY PRODUCTION IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

11. REPAIR OF LEBANESE ROAD NETWORK. THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF HIGHWAYS HAS ANNOUNCED A GOL DECISION TO PURCHASE NEW ROAD-BUILDING EQUIPMENT WITH A TOTAL VALUE OF 400 MILLION POUNDS. HE ALSO SAID THAT EXTENSIVE WORK ON LEBANON'S ROAD NETWORK WOULD COMMENCE IN THE SPRING AND INCLUDE REPAIRING OF BRIDGES AND REASPHALTING OF THE ENTIRE ROAD SYSTEM.

12. BANKS TO OFFICIALLY REOPEN. THE LEBANESE BANKING ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCED THAT ALL BANKS WILL REOPEN OFFICIALLY JAN 17, MOSTLY IN THEIR OLD CENTER LOCATIONS ALONG RIAD EL-SOLH STREET.
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